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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 000610

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/07/2012

TAGS: [PGOV IT](#) [ITPGOV](#) [ITALIAN POLITICS](#)

SUBJECT: RUTELLI STILL "LEADER" OF ITALY'S CENTER-LEFT --
BUT THE COALITION CANNOT HIDE ITS DISARRAY

REF: 01 ROME 6496

CLASSIFIED BY: POLMILCOUNS GARY ROBBINS, REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: AFTER PUBLIC SQUABBLING WHICH
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PAGE 02 ROME 00610 01 OF 02 071804Z
UNDERScoreD THE DISARRAY IN ITALY'S CENTER LEFT, PRESIDENT OF
THE DAISY ALLIANCE FRANCESCO RUTELLI REMAINS LEADER OF THE
CENTER-LEFT OLIVE TREE COALITION, AT LEAST FOR NOW. THE
COALITION EXPOSED ITS UNEASY PARTNERSHIP, HOWEVER, BY
CREATING A BOARD COMPOSED OF ALL COALITION PARTY LEADERS TO
OVERSEE RUTELLI. END SUMMARY.

12. (U) ON JANUARY 30, THE OLIVE TREE DIRECTORATE HELD A
SIX-HOUR MEETING TO DISCUSS FRANCESCO RUTELLI'S ROLE AS
LEADER OF THE CENTER-LEFT COALITION. RUTELLI HAD BEEN
PUBLICLY CRITICIZED BY HIS "ALLIES" FOLLOWING SELECTION OF
ITALY'S REPRESENTATIVES TO THE EU CONVENTION. THE TWO
PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES TO THE EU CONVENTION ARE NAMED
BY THE PRESIDENTS OF THE TWO CHAMBERS. CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
PRESIDENT PIER FERDINANDO CASINI CHOSE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC
CENTER-CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION (CCD-CDU) DEPUTY MARCO
FOLLINI AND SENATE PRESIDENT MARCELLO PERA CHOSE ITALIAN
RENEWAL (RI, PART OF THE DAISY ALLIANCE) SENATOR LAMBERTO
DINI. DEMOCRATS OF THE LEFT (DS) PRESIDENT MASSIMO D'ALEMA
WAS NOT SELECTED, AND DS MEMBERS ACCUSED RUTELLI OF
REPRESENTING HIS OWN DAISY ALLIANCE BY FAVORING DINI OVER
D'ALEMA, RATHER THAN CONSULTING WITH THE OLIVE TREE COALITION
ON A COALITION REPRESENTATIVE. (ALTHOUGH THE TWO CHAMBER
PRESIDENTS CHOOSE THE DELEGATES AUTONOMOUSLY, THERE IS
USUALLY BACKSTAGE DISCUSSION ON PREFERENCES.)

13. (SBU) AT THE JANUARY 30 MEETING, RUTELLI WAS ALLOWED TO
REMAIN LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION UNTIL THE OLIVE TREE'S
CONVENTION IN THE FALL. COALITION MEMBERS MADE CLEAR,
HOWEVER, THAT DURING THE DAISY CONGRESS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL,
RUTELLI MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN REMAINING THE TITULAR LEADER OF
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PAGE 03 ROME 00610 01 OF 02 071804Z
THE CENTER-LEFT OR PRESIDENT OF THE DAISY ALLIANCE. IT WAS
ALSO DECIDED THAT A DIRECTORATE COMPOSED OF COALITION PARTY
LEADERS WOULD REPLACE THE POSITION OF DEPUTY COALITION LEADER
HELD BY DS SECRETARY PIERO FASSINO -- A CLEAR INDICATION THAT
THE COALITION WANTED TO EXERT GREATER CONTROL OVER RUTELLI'S
LEADERSHIP.

14. (U) SEVERAL DAYS LATER, ON FEBRUARY 2, THE OLIVE TREE
COALITION ORGANIZED A RALLY TO DENOUNCE THE JUSTICE POLICIES
OF THE BERLUSCONI GOVERNMENT. THE RALLY WAS MEANT TO
RELAUNCH THE COALITION FOLLOWING THE LATEST DS-DAISY CRISIS.
MOVIE DIRECTOR NANNI MORETTI (A FAMOUS DIRECTOR, LEFTIST
INTELLECTUAL, WITH CLOSE TIES TO THE DS), INVITED TO ADDRESS
THE RALLY, UNEXPECTEDLY ATTACKED OLIVE TREE LEADERS, FOCUSING
HIS IRE MAINLY ON HIS ONE-TIME DS FRIENDS. MORETTI CHARGED
THE GROUP WITH PUTTING TOGETHER A USELESS GATHERING.⁸
ADDRESSING THE HAPLESS LEADERS, HE CONDEMNED THEM FOR DOING
NOTHING RIGHT AND FAILING UTTERLY AT SELF-REFLECTION AND
SELF-CRITICISM. WITH SUCH LEADERS,⁸ MORETTI CONTINUED,
&WE WILL NEVER WIN. IT WILL TAKE TWO OR THREE GENERATIONS
TO BEAT BERLUSCONI.⁸ MORETTI'S STINGING DENUNCIATIONS
RECEIVED WIDESPREAD MEDIA COVERAGE, RUBBING SALT IN THE
LEFT'S (SELF-INFLECTED) WOUNDS. THE DS, SEEKING TO AVOID
FURTHER PUBLIC DISPLAY OF DIRTY LAUNDRY, PROPOSED THAT
MORETTI AND OTHER INTELLECTUALS COME TOGETHER TO GIVE
SUGGESTIONS FOR A MORE QUALIFIED AND EFFICACIOUS OPPOSITION.
A MEETING HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 22; THE DS'S PIERO
FASSINO MET WITH MORETTI FEBRUARY 7 TO DISCUSS IT FURTHER.

15. (C) COMMENT: OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THE CENTER-LEFT
COALITION HAS REGISTERED MANY INTERNAL -) BUT NOT SO QUIET
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PAGE 04 ROME 00610 01 OF 02 071804Z
-- DISPUTES. RUTELLI WAS NAMED LEADER OF THE OLIVE TREE
COALITION AND FASSINO THE COALITION'S DEPUTY STRICTLY FOR
CAMPAIGN PURPOSES. AFTER THE ELECTIONS, IT BECAME
INCREASINGLY CLEAR (AND INCREASINGLY PUBLIC) THAT RUTELLI'S
LEADERSHIP WAS LITTLE BUT A USEFUL ELECTORAL FICTION; HE
PRESENTED HIMSELF AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, AND EVEN
D'ALEMA, IN A COUPLE OF INTERVIEWS, GRACIOUSLY CONCEDED HIM
THE TITLE. BUT EVIDENCE POINTED TO THE CONTRARY. DURING
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES AND VOTES, RUTELLI THEORETICALLY SPOKE

FOR THE OLIVE TREE -- WHILE THE DS SPOKE FOR ITSELF. IN EVEN THE SYMBOLIC, IF IMPORTANT, ACT OF EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO OUR THEN-CHARGE AFTER SEPTEMBER 11, WE SAW EVIDENCE OF SHARP ELBOWS BETWEEN RUTELLI AND D'ALEMA, WITH EACH EVENTUALLY COMING TO THE EMBASSY SEPARATELY TO EXPRESS SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT.

16. (C) COMMENT, CONTINUED: THE CENTER-LEFT KNOWS IT HAS A PROBLEM ON ITS HANDS. SUGGESTING IT FACES POLITICAL EXTINCTION IS CERTAINLY OVERSTATING THE POINT, BUT THE COALITION AND ITS MEMBER PARTIES STAND LITTLE CHANCE OF BEING MORE THAN A NATTERING CROWD ON THE EDGE OF ITALIAN POLITICS UNLESS THEY CAN PULL TOGETHER. IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE GROUPS MAKE IT UNLIKELY THAT THEY WILL FIND THAT MAGICAL MEETING POINT FOR A MUTUAL PROGRAM, AND MORE

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PAGE 01 ROME 00610 02 OF 02 071804Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	DODE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00
	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00
	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00
	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00
	SNIS-00	NISC-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	/007W					

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P 071741Z FEB 02
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2019
INFO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES

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IMPORTANTLY, NONE OF THE PARTIES IS WILLING TO GIVE UP ASPIRATIONS OF NATIONAL LEADERSHIP. FOR NOW, IT LOOKS LIKE THE CENTER-LEFT WILL CONTINUE IN ITS LARGELY SELF-IMPOSED POLITICAL EXILE.
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PAGE 02 ROME 00610 02 OF 02 071804Z

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